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Latimer, Becky

From: Latimer, Becky
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2020 3:25 PM
To: ...
Subject: 2019-281-S

Dear Thomas Juchum,

This is to acknowledge receipt of your Letter of Protest/Comments to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina. Your Letter of Protest/Comments will be placed in the Protest File of the Docket listed below and on the Commission's Website at www.psc.sc.gov.

- Docket No. 2019-281-S - Application of Palmetto Utilities, Incorporated for Adjustment (Increase) of Rates and Charges, Terms and Conditions, for Sewer Service Provided to Customers in Its Richland and Kershaw County Service Areas

A Protestant is an individual objecting on the ground of private or public interest to the approval of an Application, Petition, Motion or other matters which the Commission may have under consideration. A Protestant may offer sworn testimony but cannot cross-examine witnesses offered by other parties.

According to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, filing a Protest does not make you a Party of Record. A Protestant desiring to become an Intervenor (i.e., a Party of Record) in a proceeding before the Commission may file a Petition for Intervention within the time prescribed by the Commission.

You can follow this Docket and other daily filings made at the Commission by subscribing to the Commission's Email Subscriptions at this link: <https://dms.psc.sc.gov/Web/Email>; or you can follow the individual Docket at the link listed below:

Docket No. 2019-281-S - Application of Palmetto Utilities, Incorporated for Adjustment (Increase) of Rates and Charges, Terms and Conditions, for Sewer Service Provided to Customers in Its Richland and Kershaw County Service Areas <https://dms.psc.sc.gov/Web/Dockets/Detail/117238>

If we may be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,
Becky Latimer

Campbell, Chad

Subject: FW: [External] Docket No. 2019-281-S

From: Themusj
Sent: Sunday, February 09, 2020 3:06 PM
To:
Subject: [External] Docket No. 2019-281-S

Good Morning

If I have directed this to the wrong individual, I apologize upfront.

Two years ago I wrote and spoke at the PSC concerning Palmetto Utilities rate increase. I had planned at the very least to submit a letter for the record, if not attend the PSC meeting and speak, but time as gotten by and I believe January 21st was the deadline to Petition to Intervene. (Two years ago I believe it was called 'Letter to Protest'.)

Am I correct on that deadline?

Two years ago I limited the scope of my comments for the three minutes to the principle of fairness and equity by stating my opposition to the flat rate vs. one based on usage. The PSC ended up granting Palmetto Utilities a rate increase of \$52.10 immediately rather than \$68.05 over three years. IE. Year one \$48.35, Year two \$58.20 and Year three \$68.05.

I did recently attend and spoke at Palmetto Utilities Clemson Road Town Hall. It was packed out the door literally and it was quite obvious the rate increase was not well-received. My son even spoke and made it on local tv.

Here are some points you may want to zero in on:

1. Mark Daday spoke and he was quick to say that the PSC denied them their full rate request two years ago, hence the reason for this one. That statement of his is a bit disingenuous. While the PSC did not give Palmetto Utilities a rate increase of \$68.05 over three years, they gave them immediate relief of \$52.10 a month. So instead of the first year being \$48.35 as they were seeking, they received \$5.75 more a month than requested.
2. Mark Daday was definitely challenged by is audience and he let it slip that part of their expenses were due to additional costs with their Northern Pipeline when SCE&G would not give them land right-away. He also 'accidentally' shared that they had additional costs from a lawsuit by Kershaw county over some drain or sewage issue. Now everyone in the room was/were questioning the wisdom in the first place for Palmetto Utilities purchasing Palmetto Richland and the costs associated with building the Northern Pipeline. Why are the consumers having to pay for poor business choices and as result these incurred expenses? It truly does parallel what turned out to be the VC disaster with SCEC&G. Why is this utility allowed to pass onto the consumer every expense associated with their business and do so without any competition for the consumer to go to? Mark even stated as another justification their

properly taxes increased! Of course they would (respectively the big dummy.) They purchased land all around that Northern Pipeline. But unlike any other taxpayer, we cannot run to our employers and require raises to pay for our property tax increases. We absorb it or do without something else.

3. Mark Daday faced a great deal of frustration over their fixed rate. Hardly had the meeting begun, when he shared they are looking into a variable rate solution. It took awhile to get to my turn, but when I did, I shared I spoke at the PSC meeting in 2017. I had the testimonies and PSC ruling in my hand, and then pointed out that Mark Daday was being a bit misleading. Indeed, he already knew that the PSC had turned down the idea of variable rates two years ago. I then spoke to those in attendance further and shared that why is it when you use less electricity, you pay less; when you use less gasoline, you pay less; but with Palmetto Utilities, you use less, you pay more!. My comments must have been felt by everyone in the room for I received, as my son stated later, the loudest applause of anyone's comments in the entire room. Indeed, why should a single retired veteran on disability pay as much as a family of five or more. And such an individual attended that meeting and asked the same question!
4. Mark Daday kept saying we've had flat rate fee for 30 years, like he took pride in it, and they had few complaints in all those years. Duh, for the most part the rates stayed the same! No disrespect intended, but that is a guy who is out-of-touch with reality. He cannot see the rates have gone up over the last five to six years with no end in sight. Almost going to be a \$1,000 a year just to have a sewer line you may not use, or use little depending on the number of individuals in your home.

In closing, I understand most of these comments needed to go to the PSC. Indeed, at the meeting on Clemson Road, one of your staff in attendance I am sure felt a bit 'stressed' with one of the members of the audience scolding him for allowing these increases. I recognize there are constraints and realities that make rate increases necessary. Still, when one has a monopoly structured as Palmetto Utilities with a ratepayer guaranteed rate of return of 9-10 percent (not including operating margin determined by the PSC as of 15%); and for the ratepayer no means to save or economize as in reducing consumption; there has to be in a fair and equitable society some means to keep such entities in check or we face down the road another example of SCE&G and the VC nuclear plants. May our history not repeat itself with Palmetto Utilities.

Sincerely,
Thomas Juchum